

BROTHERS DIE AS SISTER'S AUTO COLLIDES WITH TANKER, TWO HURT

Haslam, Ashton Declared Eligible for Chief Exam

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Gasoline Tanker Truck Hits Car, Kills Brothers

Two young brothers were killed Tuesday evening when the convertible in which they were riding was struck by a 6100-gallon tank-truck and spun 42 feet into a telephone pole at Main St. and East R.

The boys, Richard Martinez, 6, and his brother Raymond, 9, were thrown from the car by the impact, Highway Patrol officers said. Richard was killed instantly, and Raymond died shortly after arrival at Harbor General Hospital. The boys were here on a Thanksgiving visit from New Mexico. They were staying with relatives at 21425 S. Grace St.

Driver of the car was the boys' sister, Viola Martinez, 20, of San Pedro. She was taken to Harbor General Hospital suffering from extreme shock, contusions and abrasions. Another brother, Tony, 16, sustained head injuries.

The Highway Patrol said that the driver of the truck was Robert Mitchell Hitch, 28, of Willowbrook. He was not injured. The truck, a semi-trailer carrying 6100 gallons of gasoline, was traveling north on Main St. when it plowed broadside into the car and knocked it off the road. The driver was not held.

Funeral services are pending today at Stone and Myers Mortuary.



TRAFFIC VICTIM . . . One of the young Martinez brothers, both fatalities in a tanker-truck crash here Tuesday evening, lies where he was thrown by the impact. The two young boys died of injuries suffered when their sister's auto and a gasoline tanker collided at East Rd. and Main St. (Photo by Allan Risk Jr.)

Dead Woman's Kin Fears Killer Hiding In Home

Mrs. Freeman E. Battershell, whose mother-in-law was bludgeoned to death Tuesday morning in Los Angeles, called Torrance police to investigate when she found the door of her house open Tuesday afternoon and feared that the killer might be inside.

Mrs. Battershell returned to her home, 3218 Torrance Blvd., at 3:55 p.m., found the house open and summoned Torrance officers M. H. Porter and Don Hartell, who investigated and found nothing.

Her mother-in-law, Mrs. Iris Battershell, 71, was found dead in the bedroom of her home, 134 W. 117th St. She had been beaten savagely about the head with a three-foot tree limb and her left arm was broken.

The elderly woman's son-in-law, Frank Beller, 40, was taken into custody by detectives for questioning in the slaying. He was arrested Tuesday night in Long Beach, where he lives with his mother, Beller and Mrs. Battershell's daughter, Mrs. Margaret Beller, had been estranged, he told police.

When she found her door open, the local woman feared that Beller, her brother-in-law, might have sought refuge in her home. Torrance police said that they believed the door had been left open by mistake when Mrs. Battershell left in a hurry earlier in the day.

Detectives said that there was no indication that robbery or burglary was the motive for the slaying.

Father of Seven Butts Head Against Jail Cell Wall, Dies

A Torrance father of seven children killed himself by butting his head against the wall of his jail cell Monday in Long Beach.

Police said that Henry L. Medina, 37, of 362 213th St., went berserk after being jailed on an intoxication charge and butted his head against the corner of a cell wall twice. He died about five hours later in Seaside Hospital after surgeons closed a deep cut in his head, three inches wide and six inches long, police reported.

Medina's wife, Concha, said that she had a friend take her husband to the Long Beach city jail Friday to "sober up" after a three-week drinking bout. She said that he had been drinking whiskey for about three weeks and had been depressed.

Saturday, Medina was sentenced to 25 or five days in jail. Police said that the man was placed in solitary at about 3:40 p.m. Monday after he had complained violently that other prisoners were giving him trouble.

Officer C. K. Butler said he checked the cell at 5 p.m. and locked it again when Medina attempted to force his way out. About 15 minutes later, a trusty called the jailers, saying that Medina was bleeding.

The prisoner fought the jailers screaming "Don't come near me!" police were told. Officers said that Medina had to be kept in restraining straps because of his berserk condition.

A physician was called and Medina was removed to Seaside Hospital at 5:45 p.m., where he was given blood transfusions and intravenous injections for shock.

Services Slated For Past Leader Of Woman's Club

Funeral services will be held Saturday for Mrs. Edna F. Stone, 63, a former resident of Torrance and a past matron of the Torrance Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star and past president of the Torrance Woman's Club.

Services will be held at 11 a.m. at Metteli's Mortuary and interment will follow at Rosevelt Memorial Park. Mrs. Stone, who moved from Torrance to Long Beach 20 years ago, died Tuesday in a Long Beach hospital.

She is survived by her mother, Mrs. Ida Flint; a son, Joseph Stone; two grandchildren, Robert and Christy Stone, and an aunt, Miss Laura Couch, all of Long Beach.

Her husband, Joseph, was employed by National Supply Co. prior to his death in 1932. Mrs. Stone was a member of the First Church of Christ, Scientist. She and her family lived in Torrance from 1914 to 1939. She was born in Lake City, Mich.

Injured Boy, 6, Improves After 11 Days in Coma

After 11 days in a semi-coma, Jay Crow, 6, regained consciousness Saturday at Harbor General Hospital and his condition is now "good and steadily improving," hospital spokesmen said yesterday.

The boy was hospitalized on Nov. 10 after being struck by a car near his home, 4908 Sepulveda. Driver of the car was Aon Roger Koontz, of Manhattan Beach.

Industry Votes Approval of School Bonds

Formal approval of the proposed \$3,000,000 bond issue of the Torrance Unified School District was voted Tuesday by members of the Torrance Industries Tax Committee, composed of leaders of Torrance's industrial empire. It was reported by Chairman Robert I. Plomert Jr.

The group heard School Superintendent J. H. Hull outline the needs for additional schools here and his proposals for raising the funds. The industrial spokesmen voted to approve the bond issue over the proposal that a \$1 override tax be imposed.

In other action by the committee, Read H. Parlin, of Doak Aircraft, was elected chairman of the group to succeed Robert I. Plomert Jr., who had headed the committee for a number of years. Fred Mill, division controller for National Supply, was re-elected secretary.

Blonde To Tell All Tomorrow

Shapely blonde Virginia Conway, 22, is scheduled to appear in Dept. 40 of Los Angeles Superior Court tomorrow to answer charges that she attempted to kill her husband, Tom, by running over him with the family auto.

Charges of assault with intent to commit murder were brought against the Hollywood screen and TV actress when witnesses told police that she tried to run over her husband on Main St. near 209th St. on Oct. 29 after a family altercation.

Mrs. Conway said that she was just trying to hold her spouse for the police because he had smashed out the windows in her convertible.



EARLY TURKEY . . . Ann Breault, 3 1/2, daughter of E. P. Breault, mill operator at the local North American plant, gets in on a turkey feed a day early. She accompanied her father to the CIO Hall here yesterday where pickets on duty at the local aircraft plant were fed turkey dinners. (Herald photo)

Students Given 4-Day Holiday

A four-day Thanksgiving holiday began today for all Torrance school children.

Elementary school children and Torrance High School students have no classes today or tomorrow, and will report back to school on Monday, Board of Education spokesmen announced.

State Apportions Sum For South End of Freeway

A sum of \$4,650,000 has been adopted by the State Highway Commission for construction of the south end of the Harbor Freeway in Wilmington from Battery St. to a point just north of Pacific Coast Hwy., it was reported this week.

The money was adopted as part of the Commission's 1954-55 construction budget. Preliminary plans for the project are being prepared and are due for submission to the commission early next year, it was announced.

The state is planning to widen Figueroa St. in the Keystone area to provide for the greater flow of traffic.

Procedure to Fill Other Ranks Told

Assistant Chief Willard Haslam and Detective Capt. Ernie Ashton emerged this week as the two eligible men to take the Civil Service examination to qualify for appointment as chief of police here on the retirement of Chief John H. Stroth.

Stroth has announced that he would retire early next year after 30 years on the force.

Qualification of the two veteran Torrance police officers for the top post was made by the City Council here Tuesday on the recommendation of the city's Civil Service Commission.

The Commission had previously recommended action under an ordinance found to be superseded, and the action of the group reported to the Council Tuesday recommended that the examination for chief of police be given to all members of the department who had held the rank of assistant chief or captain for at least one year. Only Haslam and Ashton meet the qualification.

Exams Slated

Examinations have been called for by the City Manager and will be given by the County Civil Service Board, probably in January. Walter C. Bradford, secretary of the local Civil Service Commission, reported yesterday.

At the same time, the Council adopted the commission's recommendation for establishing an eligible list for an assistant chief, with examinations being given to all members of the local force who had held the rank of captain, lieutenant, or sergeant for at least a year.

Also to be established is an eligible list for captains to be taken from examinations held among the sergeants who have held their rank here for a year.

Council Splits

Adoption of the procedure for selection of a new chief was not unanimously supported by the Council. Councilmen Willis G. Blount and Harvey B. Spelman

Bargain Prices A Feature at Local Dealer's

A little bit of everything at bargain prices for the home— that is, and has been for the past eight years, the distinction of Burke's Bargain Spot, 2113 Torrance Blvd.

For the holiday season, the "Spot" is featuring a large selection of toys and gifts ranging in price from as low as 98 cents. The hurried shopper will find an assortment of ceramic ash trays and Lazy Susans filled with dried fruits and nuts ready for shipment anywhere in the country.

As the Christmas season approaches, check your Herald classified section for gift suggestions.

Call FA-84000

Officials Deny Seaside School Switch

Rumors that Seaside Heights children had been transferred into the new Meadow Park School zone which is scheduled to open early next year were denied by school officials here yesterday.

They said no attendance zone boundaries for the new school would be adopted until after the Christmas vacation.

Residents of the area were up in arms this week, some of them claiming that their children would be forced to travel three miles to a bungalow school while the Seaside Elementary School was within a few blocks of their homes.

Some mothers reported to the Herald yesterday that they would go on a "sitdown strike" if their children were transferred, and would keep them out of school.

Superintendent of Schools J. H. Hull explained the district's position to some of the mothers who called his office.

Dr. Hull explained that no attendance boundaries would be drawn up until the district's pin-map was brought up to date during the Christmas vacation.

The pin map is the district's method of "counting noses" of its school population. A large, complete map of the city contains pins representing every student in a Torrance school. The pin is stuck in the map at the spot where the student lives.

Three types of pins are used, one for students in the kindergarten through fourth grades,

